Friends Bulletin

PACIFIC YEARLY MEETINGS OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

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...by Centering Down

Love is commitment.

Commitment is a necessary ingredient to centering down. Both commitment and centering down are essential for community. Are Friends ready to assume this commitment to each other in a deeper way? If so, can we do this without losing the capacity for outreach to the wider community? Probably we can neither commit ourselves to each other nor to the broader community in adequate measure without doing both.

Howard Brinton in 1943 said: "For Friends the most important consideration is not the right action in itself, but a right inward state out of which right action will rise. Given the right inward state right is inevitable. Inward state and outward action are component parts of a single whole."

We can examine the quality of the spirit of community of Berkeley Meeting with the thermometer of our queries. For instance, relevant ones include: "Are your Meetings for Worship and Business held in expectant waiting for divine guidance? Is there a living silence in which you feel drawn together by the power of God in your midst? Are your Meetings a source of strength and guidance for daily living? Are love and unity maintained among you?"

My thermometer reads "fever" and the threat of the ravages of serious illness of which we're already growing aware. We suffer from a debilitating state of alienation and isolation from each other brought on by the oppression of a sick society. Many of us lack the deep personal relatedness with one another without falling into the trap to which the weightiest Quaker is subject . . . Quakers are often painted with the brush of being inbred, of speaking only to each other. How can we find and preserve the strength of our closer community without jeopardizing our outreach to the larger community? We are part of a whole cloth.

In Berkeley the challenge and need to do this is greater than most places. The cacophony of demands and of discord upon our ears is more than the soul can withstand. Our First Day Worship Meetings are a microcosm of this condition. But compassion demands we listen and respond with all the strength and courage we can summon. Does this mean we can summom more?

Yes, I believe we could begin to quench our thirst from the Living Waters from the well implicit in the promise, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." While we need the opportunity for outreach the First Day Worship Meeting now provides, we need also to heal the internal schizophrenia, to husband our strength, and provide spiritual nourishment for ourselves and each other by developing a more appropriate structure in which this can take place.

Can we not begin to see what that may be by turning our attention once again to the "microcosm" represented by home Worship and Fellowship Meetings attempted by Berkeley Meeting sometime ago? Midweek Worship Meeting followed a potluck supper in the home of a member/attender on a rotating basis within a geographic grouping determined by zip code.

The spiritual feedback from what few Meetings were held demonstrated to me that this could be a very important means for developing human-scale, supportive units for solidarity and closeness. It's a sure way to relate in depth, family to family (children become individuals instead of streaking, noisy bodies), person to person, communicating in a natural way under warm, homey conditions. We can begin to bring wholeness to our fragmented lives and diminish the pain, conscious or unconscious, of struggling alone which tears us daily—by assuming the commitment to ourselves and to each other—by centering down.

We can experience joy and celebration of community and minimize the spiritual attrition the strain of daily living brings. We need not be White Niggers.

VIRGINIA O'ROURKE
BERKELEY

FRIENDS BULLETIN
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Dennis Durby, Editor

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New Editor Announced

The Bulletin Committee met in January and named Dennis Durby, of Orange Grove Meeting, to serve as the new Editor of the Friends Bulletin for the next three years. He will take up his duties March 1, 1973. The Committee felt that Dennis Durby's close association with Pacific Yearly Meeting during the past four years of growth and change, his ability to relate sensitively to Friends of all ages, and his contacts with young Friends especially qualify him to serve as Editor at this time. We wish him well.

PEGGY SPEAR
Chairman, Bulletin Committee

People

Jay W. Thatcher of North Pacific Yearly Meeting, and Russell H. Vogel of Pacific Yearly Meeting are two of fourteen young Friends form the U.S.A. and Mexico selected to take part in the 1973 Quaker Youth Pilgrimage this summer. They were selected by the American Section of the Friends World Committee for the Pilgrimage and will join other young Friends from Britain, Ireland and Continental Europe. The 1973 Quaker Youth Pilgrims will be in England the full time, visiting numerous places of historical Quaker interest.

Lincoln Moses is the new Chairman of the Executive Committee of AFSC's Northern California Region.

Virginia Heck has a sojourning minute from Berkeley Meeting to Honolulu, where she is filling in as AFSC director until a replacement can be found for Bill Sullivan, who resigned.

Sang Dal Cha planned to be in Washington in January to talk to Congressmen about matters involving Southeast Asia and Korea. His schedule calls for arrival in Korea in March to take up his role as Friend in the Orient. Honolulu Meeting sent him $100 toward his expenses and set up a fund for special additional contributions from interested Friends in the Meeting.

Phyllis Thompson of Honolulu Meeting will be an exchange professor at San Francisco State University until June.

Ian Low is the new caretaker at University Friends Meetinghouse, replacing Greg Berleman, who has received a B.A. in history from the University of Washington and moved to Portland.

Visitation Committee

A revitalized Committee on Visitation is being formed as a subcommittee of our Committee on Ministry and Oversight of Pacific Yearly Meeting. This comes as an outgrowth of concern and decision at last August's session at St. Mary's College.

As the nominated Chairperson of that subcommittee, may I share a few thoughts? Our committee members will try to visit a good number of Meetings and Worship Groups throughout the year. However, I see our main task as encouraging each of you, individually and as Meetings to reach out to nearby Meetings.

(1) As an individual or family, look in your Quarterly Meeting directory, find the nearest Meeting or Worship Group, phone someone in that Meeting to ascertain the time and place—and go! Your local Meeting can manage without you perhaps once every two or three months?

(2) High school and college age Friends: If your own Meeting is small, invite young people from two or three nearby Meetings for a beach party, a back pack trip, a play-reading, a shared silent hike and Meeting for Worship on a mountaintop, a pot luck supper and evening of talking with an AFSC staff person or FCL person about some of the exciting aspects of their programs. If you have talents or concerns you'd like to share with nearby Meetings, how about organizing a Young Friends Caravan in the summertime to visit and share with several Meetings?

(3) As Meetings, think in your next Business Meeting about the possible joint activities you could have with nearby Meetings or Worship Groups: joint camp-outs, retreats, special speakers, folk dance parties, workdays at each other's Meetinghouses. You will think of many others.

(4) When you have a particularly good interchange, a visit, a joint activity, please share with the rest of us; it might inspire others. Use the Bulletin. It is our excellent means of communications.

Thus may our Friends of Pacific Yearly Meeting strengthen one another in love and fellowship and refreshed spirits.

"Take my hand," we are saying. "Problems become lighter, joys become deeper, sensitivity is quickened, dedication to that which is essential is renewed."

Your Visitation Committee can make suggestions and do a little, but YOU all are the Committee of Visitation when it comes to action.

LOIS W. BAILEY

Resurrection

(The following was extracted from the May, 1972, newsletter of San Francisco Monthly Meeting. –Editor)

. . . At this time I was permitted to see, as a cyclorama before my mind, the Religious Society of Friends in the form of a skyscraper. The building was standing tall; however, workmen were busily removing parts of the foundation. I questioned their actions and they said they had been told we were an unstructured meeting and since structure was not necessary they were removing it. When they started tearing away at supporting beams I found myself crying out that we are not unstructured we are unprogrammed. Still they looked at me, smiled and kept tearing down around me. Then I found myself climbing that building, climbing and being knocked down and feeling worn out, and still climbing and clutching and praying to find something or someone to stop this unwitting destruction of what I loved and knew to be good. When I reached the top there was a brilliance and such peace as I had never known came upon me. This brilliance seemed to envelop the workmen. Then I had the realization that the struggle had been worth it, even though my hands were bleeding and I was very bruised. Suddenly the brilliance hovered over the top of the building and fused a glass dome in place and a voice said "the only change needed in structure is a glass roof to allow more light to shine in."

I have pondered much since that Meeting on Easter. I dearly love my own Meeting and realize how much it means to me. I realize I never could think of leaving what is important. However, I am grateful to San Luis Obispo Worship Group members. I had need of worship with Friends—they did not know my thoughts, but because of the climate of their meeting, by living their faith, they provided for my need.

In the County of San Luis Obispo I experienced much of the beauty of God's nature. But in that Meeting for Worship in San Luis Obispo, I experienced God.

CAROL VOLK
San Francisco

Junior High

July 9-30, ending at Yearly Meeting. This is a High Sierra Adventure, with opportunities for back-packing in the areas near Florence Lake, Bishop, Mt. Whitney and Bristlecone, with a 24-hour visit at the Co-op Family Camp at Camp Sierra, and a stop at the Farm Workers' center in Delano.

Cost: Pacific Ackworth Summer Tuition	$60
Transportation, camp fees, misc.	40
Food (allowing for Camp Sierra and back-packing food costs)	50

Open to boys and girls finishing 7th, 8th or 9th grades this June. If interested send a post card to John Way, 6210 Temple City Blvd., Temple City, CA 91780. Phone: (213) 286-0337.

Single Standard

Orange Grove Meeting has forwarded a letter to the PYM Committee on Ministry and Oversight stating the Meeting's concern that the section of the present Eleventh Query which says "... do you keep a single standard of truth, so that you are free from the use of judicial or other oaths?" does not appear in clear form in the new Queries. The Meeting recommends that it be retained in some clearly stated manner.

NORTH PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING – 1973

JULY 19 – JULY 22
ST. MARTIN'S COLLEGE
OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON

PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING – 1973

JULY 30 – AUGUST 4
SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE
MORAGA, CALIFORNIA

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